

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
OMB-01 HA-05 /111 W
-----012652 100047Z /20

O 092317Z JUN 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1920
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USUN NEW YORK 02379

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: APPROACHES TO FRONTLINE STATES

REF: (A) USUN 2364, (B) USUN 2305

1. THE BRITISH REQUESTED A CONTACT GROUP MEETING AM
JUNE 9 TO PRESENT LONDON'S REACTION TO THE LATEST
TALKING POINTS (REF A) FOR USE WITH THE FRONTLINE
STATES. THEY SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED THE GROUP THAT
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DAVID OWEN COULD NOT ACCEPT THE TALKING POINTS AS
DRAFTED. OWEN ACCEPTS THE GROUP'S CONCERN THAT
FAILURE TO WARN THE FRONTLINE OF THE IMPENDING SOUTH
AFRICAN ACTION COULD UNDERMINE FRONTLINE CONFIDENCE
IN THE FIVE; HOWEVER, HE REFUSES TO STATE IN ADVANCE
THAT THE ANTICIPATED SOUTH AFRICAN ANNOUNCEMENT IS
"NECESSARILY" INCONSISTENT WITH THE PROPOSAL. OWEN

HOLDS THAT "AN ENABLING PROCLAMATION" WOULD NOT BE INCONSISTENT. LONDON THEREFORE RECOMMENDED THAT PARAGRAPH TWO OF THE DRAFT TALKING POINTS (REF A) BE REWRITTEN AS FOLLOWS:

- "WE ALSO WISH YOU TO KNOW THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAS INFORMED US THAT THEY INTEND TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT SHORTLY OF MEASURES IN PREPARATION FOR THE REGISTRATION OF VOTERS IN NAMIBIA. WE DO NOT KNOW ITS EXACT TERMS, BUT WE HAVE TOLD THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT THAT WE WOULD STRONGLY DISAPPROVE OF ANY ACTION WHICH WOULD BE INCONSISTENT WITH OUR PROPOSAL. IF THEY DO NOT HEED OUR WARNING, WE SHALL MAKE OUR POSITION ON THIS VERY CLEAR IN PUBLIC."

2. BRITISH AMBASSADOR BROWN ALSO ADDED THAT DAVID OWEN HAS STATED THAT HE WILL NOT BE PREPARED TO CHANGE HIS POSITION UNLESS HE IS CONVINCED THAT THE OTHER FOUR FOREIGN MINISTERS HAVE PERSONALLY CONSIDERED THIS MATTER AND ARE DETERMINED TO STAND FIRMLY BEHIND THE PREVIOUS DRAFT.

3. AMBASSADOR MCHENRY REPLIED THAT LONDON'S UNWILLINGNESS TO PROCEED HAS MADE THE QUESTION OF APPROACHES TO THE FRONTLINE ACADEMIC SINCE THERE REMAINS NO TIME IN WHICH TO MAKE THEM. IN RESPONSE TO A BRITISH SUGGESTION
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THAT APPROACHES COULD STILL BE MADE IN LUANDA, MCHENRY REPLIED THAT HE WOULD RECOMMEND AGAINST THAT BECAUSE IT WOULD APPEAR AWKWARD AND PANICKY. IN ADDITION, WE WOULD STILL HAVE TO RESOLVE THE SUBSTNATIVE DIFFERENCE. THAT DIFFERENCE IS THAT THE BRITISH PREFER TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELY SOUTH AFRICAN ACTION WHEREAS WE SEE ANY UNILATERAL SOUTH AFRICAN ACTION REGARDING REGISTRATION AS INCONSISTENT WITH THE PROPOSAL AND AS PRESENTING US AT A MINIMUM WITH AN ADDITIONAL DIFFICULT POLITICAL BURDEN IN A SITUATION WHICH CANNOT TAKE MUCH MORE. MCHENRY STATED THAT IT WAS MOST REGRETTABLE THAT THE APPROACHES HAD BEEN EFFECTIVELY PRECLUDED AND ADDED THAT HE COULD NOT AGREE TO THE PROPOSED BRITISH REDRAFT BECAUSE, BASED ON THE INFORMATION AT HAND, IT WAS DISINGENUOUS. THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN DIFFER IN THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FRONTLINE, HE ADDED, SINCE WE PREFER GAINING CONFIDENCE THROUGH CANDOR WHEREAS LONDON WISHES TO HOLD BACK INFORMATION, POSSIBLY COMPOUNDING THE CREDIBILITY GAP WHICH WE HAD WORKED TO CLOSE.

4. THE GERMANS THEN STATED THAT BONN WILL BE "VERY

DISAPPOINTED" THAT THE DEMARCHES WILL NOT TAKE PLACE.
ONLY THE LACK OF TIME, HE ADDED, PRECLUDES THEIR CONTINUED
INSISTENCE. WITH REGARD TO LONDON'S PROPOSED CHANGES
IN THE TALKING POINTS, THE GERMANS STATED THAT BONN
HAD ONLY RELUCTANTLY AGREED TO THE TWO PREVIOUS WEAKENING
REVISIONS AND WOULD CERTAINLY NOT AGREE TO ANY FURTHER
ALTERATIONS. THE CANADIANS CONCURRED ENTIRELY. THE
FRENCH HAD RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS CONCURRING IN THE DRAFT
TALKING POINTS (REF A), BUT IN RESPONSE TO A DEMARCHE
FROM LONDON, PARIS HAD SUBSEQUENTLY PHONED
INSTRUCTIONS TO SUPPORT BRITISH POSITION.

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OMB-01 HA-05 /111 W

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O 092317Z JUN 78

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1921

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

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5. THE CANADIANS THEN ASKED WHETHER THE BRITISH POSITION
INVOLVES A CHANGE IN THEIR APPROVAL OF THE AGREED PRESS
STATEMENT (REF B). THE BRITISH REPLIED THAT IT DOES NOT,
BUT THE U.S., FRG, AND CANADA EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM THAT
THE UK WOULD NOT ALSO AT THE LAST MOMENT WISH

TO CHANGE THE PRESS GUIDANCE ALSO. (THE GROUP DID AGREE AT FRENCH REQUEST, TO ONE MINOR ALTERATION OF THE PRESS GUIDANCE IN THE FIFTH SENTENCE (BEGINNING "CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS...") OF THE LAST PARAGRAPH, REPLACE "ATTACK" WITH "ARMED INVASION". THE WORD "ATTACK" WHEN
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TRANSLATED INTO FRENCH, APPARENTLY READS "AGGRESSION", WHICH HAS CHAPTER SEVEN CONNOTATIONS.)

6. THE BRITISH ALSO DESCRIBED ANOTHER PROPOSAL OF DAVID OWEN'S: THAT THE FIVE AGREE NOW TO AUTHORIZE THE FRONT-LINE PRESIDENTS TO INFORM NUJOMA DURING THE SUMMIT OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO MEET WITH HIM SOON AT FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL. OWEN SUGGESTED THAT SUCH A MEETING COULD PERHAPS TAKE PLACE WHILE THE FIVE FOREIGN MINISTERS ARE IN PARIS FOR OECD ON JUNE 13-14 OR LATER THAT SAME WEEK IN LONDON. THE BRITISH SAID THAT IT WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE CLEAR THAT THE FIVE WERE NOT PREPARED TO REOPEN NEGOTIATIONS BUT NOTED THAT THE PROSPECT OF SUCH A MEETING COULD BE USED AS A BASIS FOR URGING THE SOUTH AFRICANS NOT TO GO AHEAD WITH ANY FURTHER STEPS CONCERNING REGISTRATION. (THE BRITISH ADDED THAT WE MIGHT ALSO HAVE TO CONSIDER INVITING BOTH TO MEET WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTERS.) OWEN BELIEVES THAT THE SUMMIT THIS WEEK WILL BE CRUCIAL AND FEELS THAT THE OFFER OF A FACE-SAVING MECHANISM, LIKE A FOREIGN MINISTER-LEVEL MEETING, MIGHT GREATLY INCREASE SWAPO'S RECEPTIVENESS TO ALTERING THEIR POSITION ON THE PROPOSAL.

7. THE CANADIANS AND GERMANS JOINED US IN OPPOSING THIS SUGGESTION. AMBASSADOR MCHENRY STATED THAT WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FRONTLINE MEETING, WE DO NOT SHARE THE UK EMPHASIS ON A SUMMIT OR ANY ONE MEETING. INSTEAD, WE SHOULD EMPHASIZE TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS THAT THE PROCESS OF GETTING THE SETTLEMENT EFFORT BACK ON TRACK IS A DIPLOMATIC PROCESS WHICH DOES NOT DEPEND ON THE OUTCOME OF A PARTICULAR MEETING. WE SHOULD NOT ALLOW THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO SAY LATER THAT THEY HAD
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ACCEDED TO OUR REQUEST FOR A TWO- OR THREE-DAY DELAY AND THEREFORE ARE JUSTIFIED IN GOING AHEAD. A FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING WITHOUT THE PROSPECT OF A DESIRED OUTCOME COULD BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS TO OUR EFFORT. THE

CANADIANS AGREED, STATING THAT THEY WOULD RECOMMEND TO OTTAWA THAT A FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETING AT THIS STAGE BE PROPOSED ONLY AT THE SUGGESTION OF THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS. THE CANADIANS ADDED THAT IF WE WERE TO SUGGEST A FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING, THE IMPLICATION THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO RENEGOTIATE WOULD BE UNAVOIDABLE AND MIGHT RISK LOSING THE SOUTH AFRICANS. THE GERMANS ALSO OPPOSED THE PROPOSED FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING, WHILE THE FRENCH REMAINED SILENT.

8. COMMENT: THE PERSONAL FRIENDSHIPS WITHIN THE CONTACT GROUP ARE TOO STRONG TO ALLOW THE FRUSTRATION OF THE PAST FEW DAYS TO INTERFERE WITH ITS WORK; BUT THE FRUSTRATION IS CLEARLY EVIDENT. THIS WAS PERHAPS MOST NOTICEABLE IN THE GERMAN AND CANADIAN RESPONSE TO DAVID OWEN'S SUGGESTION THAT THE PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT OF THE OTHER FOUR FOREIGN MINISTERS WOULD BE NECESSARY TO ALTER HIS VIEWS ON THE PROPOSED APPROACHES TO THE FRONTLINE. THE GERMANS CALLED OWEN'S ATTITUDE "TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE" AND THE CANADIANS TERMED IT OFFENSIVE. BOTH INSISTED THAT THE FACT THAT DAVID OWEN IS TAKING A PERSONAL INTEREST IN NAMIBIA DOES NOT REQUIRE A SIMILAR PROCEDURE FROM THE OTHER FOUR. IT WAS ONLY NECESSARY THAT WE SPEAK FOR OUR GOVERNMENTS, AND HOW EACH GOVERNMENT REACHED ITS DECISIONS WAS OF NO CONCERN TO THE OTHER. END COMMENT.

9. SUBSEQUENT TO THE MEETING, THE BRITISH CALLED TO PROPOSE A NEW FORMULA ON THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING. UNDER THE NEW APPROACH, THE FL PRESIDENTS WOULD

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
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BE AUTHORIZED TO SUGGEST A MEETING OF THE FIVE
FOREIGN MINISTERS IF THE FL PRESIDENTS CONCLUDED THAT SUCH
A MEETING WAS THE ONLY WAY TO MOVE SWAPO. WE ADVISED
THEM THAT WE WOULD REPORT THIS NEW FORMULATION. YOUNG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, BRIEFING MATERIALS, VOTER REGISTRATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USUNN02379
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780242-0640
Format: TEL
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780674/aaaacklg.tel
Line Count: 296
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Message ID: ffb6bf8b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 USUN NEW YORK 2364, 78 USUN NEW YORK 2305
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2407241
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAMIBIA: APPROACHES TO FRONTLINE STATES
TAGS: PORG, PDEV, SF, WA, UK, UN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ffb6bf8b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014